

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). I have listened with a great deal of pleasure, to the remarks which have just fallen from the lips of the various gentlemen who have preceded me. I can heartily endorse the opinion expressed by the hon. member for Gaspé (Mr. Lemieux), the hon. member for Labelle (Mr. Bourassa), and the hon. member for Jacques Cartier (Mr. Monk), that our French Canadians make excellent settlers in the North-west. I do not know however, that our French Canadian friends can complain of lack of attention to their compatriots in the North-west. As the hon. member from Alberta (Mr. Oliver) well knows, starting from Edmonton and traversing the magnificent region for upwards of thirty miles in almost every direction, especially the northern, one comes to home after home, planted by this magnificent people. Passing along the entire north Saskatchewan, one comes across a settlement of French Canadians. At St. Paul de Metis, away north-west of Fort Pitt, there is a magnificent settlement of four counties, established through the energy of the Rev. Father Lacombe, and through the efforts of the clergy, settlers are coming in there of French Canadians from Minnesota and other western states. This district far beyond the region of active settlement, is already becoming well populated. During my visit I found they had a saw-mill and grist-mill and sufficient grain in store to last them a year or so.

An hon. MEMBER. When was that ?

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). Last year. The question of inducing people, who have left Canada, to return, is one on which I differ materially from many of those who have preceded me. The duty of this government is not to coax people to come back but to place before those who wish to better their conditions the advantages of Canada. No young man who has ever lived in Canada should require to be told of its advantages. Therefore I think the department is justified in not spending time and money in sending agents among those who were formerly Canadians. Whether they went from French Canada to the New England states or from Ontario and the maritime provinces to the eastern and western states. These people correspond with their friends in Canada, they know the advantages of Canada, and if they do not choose to take advantage of them, of their own accord, no effort of ours is likely to make them do so.

Mr. LEMIEUX. Has the hon. gentleman any knowledge of the approximate number of our Canadian people who have immigrated to the United States? Is there any tabulated statement to that effect?

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). Chicago alone has upwards of 100,000 from Ontario and Boston has 200,000 from the maritime pro-

vinces. I understand that the number of Canadian born in the United States is over a million.

The MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR. About 1,250,000 Canadians in the United States.

Mr. HUGHES (Victoria). Canadian born. There is no need to spend any money in making them acquainted with the advantages of Canada as a home to which they may return at any time, and the efforts of the department should be exerted in endeavouring to bring in immigrants from England, France and Germany, but especially from Great Britain and Ireland. We should bring in emigrants who do not now know the advantages of Canada, and I must commend the Department of the Interior for its exertions along that line. I wish to draw the attention of the hon. minister to an aspect of the immigration policy, in which I am more or less interested, and to a suggestion I took the liberty of making him some years ago, and which I believe has received some attention from his department. Those who have studied the history of the Dominion know that Canada was saved to Britain in the war of 1812 by those who had formerly been British soldiers or were the descendants of British soldiers. In 1837 Canada was undoubtedly saved by those who were either British veterans or their descendants. The same class came to the front in 1867, 1870 and 1885, and went to South Africa in the recent war. The men from Canada who took part in all these wars were largely men who had seen service in the imperial army or who were the descendants of imperial soldiers. Such men make good citizens. Some years ago I suggested to the hon. minister that a number of homesteads should be set apart for these men in the North-west. Upon each of these a little cottage with an outfit should be placed and the honourably discharged British soldier should be given this homestead, subject to the cost of the cottage and outfit as a lien upon it. I do not know that I would even ask to have the whole cost paid back, or possibly he might pay the capital back without interest, and an industrious man would be able to pay it back by the end of ten years. If such a policy were carried out, it would have the effect of bringing excellent settlers into the country. I happened to be in Winnipeg this spring when a number of immigrants were going through. There were some very well to do families among them, but many had only from thirty to fifty pounds in their pockets. They were beset on every side by the agents of land companies and the agents of farmers wanting hired men. The latter had the pull, but with all due deference to those who think that an Englishman should undergo an apprenticeship to a Canadian farmer, I think that as soon as possible he should be